

"Noah....Build Me An Ark"

Tales of a preventable flood

Today, I am writing to tell you about water safety in your house because it is front and center on my mind.

Last week the braided, stainless-steel hot water line located under the kitchen sink to our dishwasher burst. Water spewed onto our kitchen floor, into the pantry and adjoining rooms and seeped through the floor into several rooms downstairs. We have a significant insurance claim! I have always taken great pride in how I take care of my house, and here I am with egg (or water) on my face.

Since our "flood", worthy of Noah, I've been doing research on water supply lines and general home water safety issues. My plumber said that, after fire, water is the worst home wrecker, and I certainly agree! Since most of us hardly look under our sinks or behind our commodes, we almost never see hoses with problems until it is too late. And frankly, they don't look too bad until they have leaked.

Commode supply lines are the worst offenders. Many supply lines have plastic washer nuts that are notorious for cracking and leaking, especially when you are away on a trip! **Replace the hot water heater every 10 years.** Eventually, they leak and you can have a 30-50 gallon water problem. *Why risk it?* More energy efficient machines are on the market now, tax rebates are currently being offered. [Click Here](#) for information on tax credits for appliances. Just out on the market is a sensor for your water heater that automatically turns the water heater off when a leak is detected.

My strongest recommendation is to **check the water supply lines every 5 years** and, **EVERY 10 YEARS, REPLACE ALL THE LINES** which connect your faucets, commodes, refrigerator ice-maker, dishwasher, washing machines, etc., **with braided, stainless-steel hoses**. They have plastic liners inside which eventually deteriorate due to age and to being exposed to cleaners/chemicals under the sink cabinets. The combination of instant hot water dispensers, which warm up the cabinet air, and the chemicals speed the breakdown of the hoses even faster! *Call me about a certain brand of hose that my research indicates is not one to use.* The braided stainless-steel hoses only cost \$12-15 each- much cheaper than your insurance deductible!

I've always heard, "Don't leave the house with the washing machine or dishwasher running" and I can tell you now that it is NOT an old wife's tale! My dad told me that he turns off the supply lines under the sinks, commodes and water heaters before he leaves on trips. This ounce of prevention is a great idea. (If you do that, be sure to turn the water supply back on very slowly so you don't put too much pressure on a weak hose. You could cause the exact problem you were trying to prevent.) *Make sure you know where the owner's water turn-off valve is in your yard.*

Send me your water disaster prevention tips, and I will share them. And, if you want help with taking a look at your water lines, I have plumbers to recommend. *We will also be happy to come over and do a walk-through at your house to help you prevent the disaster currently going on at my house!*

Carol Dochen, REALTOR

Carol Dochen REALTORS, Inc.
4501 Spicewood Springs Road
Suite 1035
Austin, TX 78759

Office: **(512) 345-2227**

Cell: **(512) 422-4787**

Fax: (512) 345-1156

Carol@CarolDochenRealtors.com
www.CarolDochenRealtors.com

More Water Handling Advice

Here are some comments in response to Carol's story.

Hi Carol,

Sorry to hear of your 'disaster'. I have been lucky so far, but about 2 years ago, I recall seeing the 'disaster' team show up across the street as my neighbors attic water heater had burst putting 50+ gallons of water into their house. I started to wonder what I would do in a similar situation. I came up with 2 ideas:

1. I called a plumber who came over and put an **automatic cutoff valve on my hot water heater**. When water is in the pan for any reason, the intake valve (cold water). is turned off. There are 'one shot' valves that plumbers can also install, but I chose this one as it can be re-used over and over.
2. I also investigated and found a [Water Alarm System](#). I **put a sensor in every A/C pan and in the water heater pan and behind my washing machine**. (You need to put the sensor on a small terry cloth rag that absorbs water and keeps the metal contacts off any metal pan.) Whenever I have water in ANY pan for any reason, I get a beeping alarm that tells me to pay attention and fix it. It has gone off a few times over the past 2 years when my A/C froze up and when my A/C drain was clogged. The water sensor under each sink or cabinet (or behind fridge, or behind washing machine) can alert to a small problem before it becomes a disaster

Hope these tips and solutions help your audience and that we never have to deal with a major issue !!

Steve Feibus